

REMARKS

The Office Action of December 22, 2005 indicates that "at least one fastener bolted to two side frames" must be shown or cancelled from the claims. That feature is cancelled in claim 11 in favor of broader language.

The Office Action also indicates that claims 1-5 and 8 are rejected as anticipated by the Light '349 patent. Claims 1, 6 and 7 are rejected as anticipated by the Hollingsworth '171 patent. Claims 9, 10 and 14 are rejected as anticipated by the Green '351 patent. Claim 11 is rejected as obvious over Green in view of the Avihod '358 patent.

Concerning claims 1-5 and 8, the Light reference discloses a portable vertebral column support, which is not a seat back, but is a pad that is placed against a seat back. The pad is not the primary support for the back, but is merely a supplement to the seat back. For example, Figure 1 illustrates the Light support pad placed on a recliner-type chair. There is no disclosure or suggestion of the support serving as a wheelchair seat back, as claimed in claim 1, or of being a component of a collapsible wheelchair, as also claimed in claim 1.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-5 and 8 with respect to Light is respectfully requested.

Concerning claims 1, 6 and 7, Hollingsworth shows a "collapsible beach chair" (see the Abstract). It is nothing but a flexible, portable seat cushion. Hollingsworth does not disclose a wheelchair seat back as claimed in the amended claims. For example, the Hollingsworth cushion is not attached to a wheelchair frame in any way, as claimed in claim 1. Hollingsworth also cannot promote any medical benefits, such as posture correction. Consequently, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 6 and 7 on the basis of Hollingsworth is respectfully requested.

Concerning claims 9, 10 and 14, Green discloses a "stair climbing wheelchair." The Green seat back is two separate pieces separated by a hinge. The area in the center of the back, in the area of the hinge, creates an area of discomfort for the user, where there is no cushioning (see Green Fig. 1). Claim 9, as amended, indicates that the seat back includes a sheet of flexible cushion material generally extending the full width and length of the seat back. This provides cushioning across the entire width of the seat back, without an uncomfortable hinge area in the center, as in Green. Green also cannot promote any medical benefits, such as posture correction. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 9, 10 and 14 is respectfully requested.

Similarly, there is no teaching or suggestion in Green or in the cited Avihod patent for this full sheet of cushion material, with the addition of a fabric cover, as claimed in claim 11. Consequently, withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of claim 11 is respectfully requested.

New claim 21 claims an embodiment as generally shown in Figures 5 and 6 of the figures of the present application. New dependent claim 22 adds that the seat back is reclinable. None of the cited references disclose or suggest the subject matter as claimed.

A product information sheet illustrating a commercial embodiment of the present invention is enclosed for the Examiner's benefit.

//

//

//

It is respectfully submitted that the present claims are allowable as presented. A prompt Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

FULWIDER PATTON LLP

By: /scott r. hansen/
Scott R. Hansen
Registration No. 38,486

SRH:tb

Howard Hughes Center
6060 Center Drive, Tenth Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90045
Telephone: (310) 824-5555
Facsimile: (310) 824-9696
Customer No. 24201
173911.1